

1. Wind, Waves, Water, & Weather Watch:

1.1. Because we need a minimum of 15' visibility to dive the St. Clair River safely, and visibility in the St. Clair is highly dependent on wind speed and direction.


1.2. No winds, or low winds out of the South for the days immediately preceding our dives and on the days of our dives generally make for good visibility and GO decisions.

1.3. High winds (greater than 10-15km/hr) out of any Northerly direction for the days immediately preceding our dives and on the days of our dives generally make for unacceptable visibility and NO-GO decisions.

1.4. Historically, we have had to cancel about one out of every three (one third) of our planned St. Clair River dive weekends due to insufficient visibility.

1.5. Local diver John Charest will give us a live visibility report and picture (like the one above) on Thu, Jun 7.

1.6. Jodi Stradeski of the Ontario Clean Waters Agency's Fort Street, Point Edward plant will give us an update on Turbidity at the intake (see conversion table below). Keep your fingers crossed and hope for a

Turbidity reading of less than 0.4 NTU  !

Turbidity-to-Visibility Conversion Table:

Turbidity (NTU)	Visibility (Feet)	Visibility Rating
0.4	~50'	Excellent
0.5	~30'	Good
1.0	~15'	Acceptable
3.5	~10'	Marginal
10.0	~5'	Poor
20.0	~1'	Unacceptable

1.7. John and I will take all of the above into consideration along with the most recent weather forecast for the weekend, to make our GO, NO GO decision at 5:00 p.m. on Thu Jun 8

2. Diver Requirements:

To participate in **all** the planned dives, and in particular the Superman dive, divers are required to:

1.1. Have in-year 2018 experience diving in cold water WITH the equipment you'll be using (the St. Clair River is NOT the place to "discover" something doesn't work or doesn't fit)

1.2. Be comfortable diving in fast and highly variable current

- 1.3. Be comfortable solving any problem underwater, as the St. Clair River is a busy international shipping route and recreational boating waterway, and is pretty much all “overhead environment diving”
- 1.4. Have, and be proficient in using, a compass for underwater navigation, using cardinal directions N,S,E,W
- 1.5. Be completely comfortable with finishing a dive solo in the event of buddy team separation
- 1.6. Be physically fit and healthy (some rigorous entries, challenging surface swims, and demanding exits)
- 1.7. Have all equipment maintained as per manufacturer recommendations and in good operating condition.

3. Air Management in Overhead Environment:

- 3.1. As all dives except for the Gladstone fall into the category of “Overhead Environment” dives, we will be planning all dives according to the “Rule of Thirds”, namely:
 - 3.1.1. One third of your air supply for “heading out”
 - 3.1.2. One third of your air supply for “heading in”
 - 3.1.3. One third of your air supply for “reserve”

4. Diving with At-Risk Species:

- 4.1. Conditions permitting, we may well be diving with hundreds of members of an at-risk species, namely Sturgeon.
- 4.2. Sturgeon have changed little in the past 200+ million years, and the ones we see in the St. Clair range between 6’ and 8’ in length, and they have grey leathery plates covering their bodies instead of scales, and whiskers similar to those of catfish.
- 4.3. This time of year, Sturgeon spawn in the entrance to the river, where the current ensures a steady flow of oxygen to the developing eggs.
- 4.4. We all need to exercise the utmost caution to minimize our impact on these amazing creatures, and ensure that they continue to recover from the near-extinction they faced in the Great Lakes before measures were taken to protect them.

5. Special Request from Gale Bravener, Aquatic Science Biologist, Fisheries and Oceans Canada:

- 5.1. If you see any spawning Sea Lamprey Eels this weekend please report them to gale.bravener@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
- 5.2. Sea Lampreys are a parasitic fish native to the Atlantic Ocean, and to find out more about efforts to control them, and how you can help, click [<here>](#)
- 5.3. On the few occasions I have seen them, there were dozens of them all writhing around one-another (like Medusa’s hair).

5.4. With their mouths closed, they have a kind of Muppet-like cuteness to them.

5.5. But with their mouths open, they look like something out of a sci-fi horror movie!

6. Equipment:

6.1. All your normal cold-water scuba kit, plus:

6.2. Minimum 3 tanks, at least one high-capacity (100+ cubic feet) tank, or a main tank plus a pony bottle so you don't have to cut short the Superman Dive

6.3. Shears / wire cutters (to cut fishing line and hooks)

6.4. If you want to bring a surface marker buoy, make sure it is of the deployable variety, and make every effort NOT to deploy it in the River. Why? Because the St. Clair is an International Shipping Channel, and it is not a very wide one, and if you deploy your SMB and a Great Lakes Ship Captain sees it, and tries to avoid it (not that that's even possible), you could be reading about it in the headlines the next day.

7. Meeting Place & Time:

IF the dive weekend is a GO, we will meet in the parking lot (the bluish "P" on the left side of the map below) off Alexandra Ave, about 20 metres / yards south of the southern-most of the two Blue Water bridges at 9:00 a.m. sharp Saturday and Sunday mornings.

8. Accommodation:

Search "accommodation near Point Edward" and take your pick.

I will be staying at the Chipican Motel as Fauld's Motel has no availability.

Chipican Motel (still has some availability)

Michigan & Christina

Phone: 1-519-336-4153 and ask for Shahid

E-Mail: chipican@sympatico.ca

Website: <http://www.chipican.com>

Fauld's Motel

1675 London Line

Sarnia, ON N7W 1B1,

Phone: (519) 542-5566

9. Possible Dives:

9.1. The Gladstone shipwreck dive (max depth ~20', enter and exit same point, brisk current, but not a drift dive)

- 9.2. The Purdy's / CSL Shipyards back-eddy dive (if Stephanie gives us permission to, that is).
- 9.3. The Barge (downstream drift) & Monarch shipwreck (back-eddy drift) looping drift dive (entry and exit same point)
- 9.4. The Lighthouse drift dive (a shorter version of the 55' profile drift dive)
- 9.5. The 55' Profile drift dive (max depth 55', a build-up to the Superman Dive)
- 9.6. The Superman drift dive (max depth 70' – 90', thousands of pickerel, hundreds of sturgeon, anchors, an abandoned underwater intake station, and 3 shipwrecks)
- 9.7. The Fontana shipwreck drift dive (max depth 90', only for the most experienced and only if conditions are favourable)

10. Air Fills:

Everybody is responsible for transporting their own tanks to and from Sentry Fire (the air fill station), and paying for them.

IF the St. Clair Dive Weekend is a GO, I will make arrangements for Sentry Fire to be open for us at 6:00 p.m. on Sat, Jun 9

Sentry Fire provides regular compressed air fills only, no nitrox.

Sentry Fire Protection Services

750 Ontario Street, Sarnia

519-383-8880

11. Contingency Plan:

In the event we make a NO-GO decision for diving the St. Clair River, then our Plan B will be to dive the Upper and Lower Niagara River